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**MIKHAIL GORBACHEV'S SPEECH
AT THIRD SESSION OF USSR
SUPREME SOVIET**

Dear Deputies

I consider it necessary to inform you about the results of the Soviet President's state visits to Canada and the United States because they have important international implications. They are also of great importance for our internal affairs.

The first thing to which I would like to draw your attention is the time factor of the summit. It so happened that two processes of world importance converged in it. The first is the beginning of fundamental transformations in this country whose scale can only be compared with the changes that took place in 1917. This makes it increasingly clear that perestroika in the Soviet Union is a central point of world politics today. The second is the peak of the radical changes in Europe.

That is why it was necessary at the junction of these processes to determine the place and role of the two most powerful states. It was necessary to ascertain their ability to work together in order to make a contribution to the preparation of far-reaching and irreversibly peaceful developments of civilisation.

The outcome of that meeting was to decide whether US-Soviet relations would exert a stabilising influence at this crucial moment when the powerful processes of change have opened up before peoples vast prospects and at the same time are fraught with dangerous upheavals

We went to the United States with the experience of the Malta meeting and the intense contacts and cooperation at all levels that followed it That enabled US-Soviet relations to pass a very serious test in connection with the developments in this country and the stormy changes that began in Eastern Europe last autumn On the whole we have passed this test successfully The breakthrough achieved in US-Soviet relations in Malta was made at the right time

The leaders of both countries did everything to match the high level of responsibility that history placed upon them at this period of transition urging each other to observe the principles of equality freedom of choice and balance of interests

Going to the United States we wanted to ascertain its position on several fundamental issues

First we wanted to make sure to what extent US policy recognised the priority of the main positive trend that has emerged lately and which is connected with growing integrity of the world and the new type of progress at the time of global dangers facing mankind

Second we wanted to make sure to what extent its policy was influenced by a desire to gain short-term advantages or cash in on the difficulties of the other side and the temporary complications in the international arena

Third we wanted to know whether there was the awareness that the USSR and the United States cannot afford to harm each other at this time of dramatic changes and that in their

policy they should not give each other the slightest cause for suspicion that the other side wants to outwit cheat or do material or moral harm

Fourth we wanted to make sure to what extent the two great powers realised the existence of an inextricable connection between real politics and the heritage of the past which is dangerous to ignore and at the same time how prepared both sides were to use new methods in managing international affairs Specifically we wanted to make sure whether the sides were prepared to abandon power politics to stop giving preference to the military interests over political ones and to base their policy on the standards of law and morality

Fifth we wanted to make sure whether there was awareness of the need to take into account in one's policy the fact that mankind is reaching a new age and that some new unusual laws and rules are beginning to work all over the world Consequently there is a need for unconventional decisions and the overcoming of the inertia of old mentality

For all these reasons the key question of our dialogue -- not only with the President but also with other representatives of American society and state -- was this what kind of Soviet Union America would like to see and what kind of United States the Soviet Union would like to see? An answer to this question determined and still determines whether the two powerful states two great peoples would be able to be together at the critical stage in the life of the world community What this together means is a secondary question a question of practical actions and everyday politics

I think by and large our visit has given a satisfactory answer to this cardinal even philosophical question and therefore to all the other questions I have listed above And I hope

our assessment does not differ much from that of the United States

It is very important in this context that the US Administration especially President Bush who is under strong pressure from different sides has managed to largely preserve a balanced and responsible approach to the most profound revolutionary changes in the Soviet Union

We had the opportunity to see that not only the upper political echelons of the United States but also influential business and academic circles and the mass of people realised that the new Soviet Union which is turning to the individual travelling the way of democratisation decentralisation glasnost and freedom in all spheres of life and offering the outside world a policy of arranging healthier relations disarmament and cooperation met the interests of their country

If so then there are decisive conditions for interaction in world politics and in restructuring international relations on the basis of new principles

We for our part using different words for different audiences have assured the Americans that we had no intention of teaching the United States how it should live Yet we would like the United States to change too and adapt to the requirements of the emerging new peaceful period of history

From the conceptual and political point of view and the discovery and acknowledgement of such agreement about the main thing are of great importance Everything else depends on this and nothing is more important than this including the choice of ways and means of using this mutual interest for the good of our two nations and the world as a whole The general formula here is this from confrontation and rivalry to mutual understanding interaction and partnership

In recent years we have covered a large part of the road in accordance with this formula and are now somewhere in the beginning of interaction though there have already emerged some elements of partnership. There is an obvious tendency. It is confirmed by the desire demonstrated during the visit to do business on an equal footing as befits the great powers that have a special responsibility to the world and have the wherewithal to fulfil this responsibility.

In spite of speculation and gloomy forecasts by well-known and self-styled Cassandras, those were frank and meaningful discussions between equal partners. They required mutual concessions and certain steps towards each other. By and large all this ensured the success of the meeting. It added trust to our relationship which had been accumulating fast since the meeting in Malta.

Now allow me to give you a point-by-point account of the negotiations.

The agreements reached in Washington on the reduction of nuclear and conventional armaments are the result of the four-year efforts of the Soviet Union and the United States. We have completed the discussion of the main provisions of the future treaty on a 50 per cent reduction of strategic offensive arms which was begun in Reykjavik. We have resolved major problems involved in counting and limiting the deployment of air-based cruise missiles on heavy bombers and sea-based cruise missiles. Until recently that is until the beginning of the visit these problems caused differences between us. Now we have created realistic opportunities for the completion of the drafting and signing of this treaty by the end of this year.

So the final question is whether we can be sure that the forthcoming reductions in Soviet and US strategic armaments

are equal. They certainly are

Will the future agreement ensure equality in the number of strategic delivery vehicles and warheads on them? Each side can deploy 1 600 strategic nuclear delivery vehicles (ICBMs SLBMs and heavy bombers) and 6 000 warheads on them. The treaty does not cover sea-based cruise missiles. They are limited by a separate document, a supplement to the treaty. This has been our position from the start, because we believe and the Americans eventually agreed with us, that if we reduce strategic offensive weapons, but leave sea-based cruise missiles unaccounted for, the Americans, who have an advanced Navy which is growing all the time, will be able quickly to forge ahead and upset the balance that would become established at a lower level after the 50 per cent reduction.

Apart from the 6 000 charges, the Soviet Union and the US have a right to deploy 880 such missiles each on submarines and surface ships of certain classes. This actually means that we have established a ceiling, which we could not do before. Now we have done it.

Under the rules of counting air-launched cruise missiles (ALCMs) on heavy bombers, the US will have a right to deploy 800-900 ALCMs, more than the Soviet Union. But under the same rule, we can have 40 per cent more such bombers (for example, the US will have 150 and the Soviet Union 210 such aircraft).

Thus, the US can have about 8 300 and the Soviet Union 7 400 charges of all classes of strategic nuclear weapons. This looks like a concession, but under the agreement the range of ALCMs will be established at 600 kilometres and more. This is what we have been fighting for throughout the past four years. And the US has agreed to this concession.

Previously it demanded that the range be established at 1 500 km then brought it down to 800 km In a word the complicated parameters of the future treaty will be carefully analysed and are a coordinated balance of concessions and interests These issues will be thoroughly analysed in the Supreme Soviet committees especially when the treaty is prepared for ratification .

Guarantees of compliance with the treaty cause major differences This issue remains unsettled Referring to special relations with Britain in the sphere of strategic armaments the Americans demand a right to transfer the technology and any class of these weapons to Britain without restriction This will preserve a channel for continued modernisation and even the build-up of strategic nuclear arsenals within the general NATO strategy in violation of the treaty This problem must be seriously analysed

It should be remembered that we made a concession during the talks on the reduction of medium-range missiles and the signing of the agreement on halving strategic offensive armaments in Reykjavik at that stage the French and British nuclear forces remained outside the agreement But later both we and the Americans discussed the issue while the French and the British promised to join the talks on the reduction of strategic nuclear armaments after the Soviet Union and the US halved their strategic offensive armaments

Now that we have sealed the main provisions and are getting ready to sign the treaty by the end of this year the discussion of the issue was resumed I mentioned it in Washington and discussed it with madam Thatcher the other day

In short we cannot accept the formula according to which the British will receive nuclear weapons and the means of

modernising them without restriction

Previously the issue at hand was the replacement of *Trident-1* with *Trident-2* missiles. Nothing more. Now they want to have a formula that would open a loophole for bypassing the US-Soviet SOF agreement. This is inadmissible and unacceptable.

In Washington we signed a very important agreement on reducing chemical weapons by 80 and on later discussing their complete elimination. The Americans had not agreed to this formula for a long time, protecting their right to produce binary weapons. So it is all the more important that they have covered their part of the way in this sphere. Besides, this agreement is paving the way to the signing of a multilateral convention on chemical weapons, which has been marking time for many years.

We have adopted protocols to treaties on the limitation of underground nuclear tests and on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. This has given the green light to the ratification of the treaties signed in the mid-1970s (1974 and 1976). This is a step towards the goal from which we never retreated -- a ban on nuclear testing.

We have reached an agreement on measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons, combat missiles capable of delivering such weapons, and corresponding technologies. This is very important. If we and the Americans agree to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons while missile technologies for nuclear delivery vehicles proliferate, we shall have to begin from the scratch every time. It should be remembered that at least 13 countries are on the threshold of getting nuclear weapons. At least we think so.

We paid special attention to the issue of conventional

reductions in Europe During the meeting with President Bush we noted that the talk on this issue have scored quite a few achievements There are prerequisites for getting the treaty ready for signing at the European summit at the end of this year It is a clearly positive achievement that the US Administration and NATO leaders have recently agreed to begin talks on tactical nuclear weapons and to pledge not to modernise them

NATO's attitude to the reduction of its Air Forces is a stumbling block They demand that the issue of shore-based Naval aviation be put on the agenda of the Vienna talks though it would be logical to discuss the issue at the future talks on Naval reductions Our Naval aviation is shore-based while the US Naval aircraft are based on ships This means that talks on Naval forces will be postponed while our shore-based Naval aviation will be included in the Vienna agreement This is unacceptable

We also have to take into account the US position concerning the involvement of a United Germany into NATO which could seriously change the balance of forces and distort the current structure of security In this case we shall have to review many of the issues currently discussed in Vienna, because the strategic situation on the continent will change

The talks on nuclear and conventional reductions are resolving problems pertaining to fundamental security interest of our country That is why these talks are held and guidelines for them are drafted by groups of qualified experts from the USSR Defence Ministry and the General Staff the Foreign Ministry the commissions of the Council of Ministers on the armaments industry and other departments We regularly involve the participation of scientists of the Academy of Sciences and other research institutes Guidelines for the talks

are drafted on the basis of research and businesslike discussions. Of course different opinions are voiced in the process but they are reduced to a common denominator during discussions.

In general I think that in Washington we have achieved major results on the issue of nuclear and conventional reductions and have created a buffer for the future by determining principles on the basis of which these talks will be held in the next few years.

All this is of vital importance. We have made another practical step towards the realisation of a world free of nuclear weapons and violence. There is much work ahead in this direction but we have started dismantling the giant monument of the cold war as the current generations realise the capabilities of mutual destruction.

I have already said that even the dismantling of this monument is a complicated and even dangerous undertaking. That is why we must act without undue haste carefully analysing the balance of forces at each stage of our movement towards the goal. The slightest distortion can be destructive for our cause.

See for yourself we have signed an agreement on reducing chemical weapons by 80 which immediately put to the fore the staggering task of creating the necessary technology. How can we destroy chemical weapons safely? It turns out that it is easier to create than to destroy them. We discussed this problem with the US President. I mean cooperation in the production of technologies for the destruction of chemical weapons.

The Soviet Union and the US bear their share of responsibility for the post-war years becoming a period of exhausting

and dangerous confrontation which depleted resources and distorted both the economies and social development. It is unprecedented and very important that our two countries have assumed responsibility for dismantling the mechanisms of East-West military confrontation as soon as possible for creating conditions for using disarmament for development for using the released resources to solve social problems and to improve the living standards of the people.

If there really has been a breakthrough leading to a spell of peace in the world in the past few years, the main credit goes to the Soviet Union and the United States of America.

European Problems

Europe is now at a turning point in its history. And all European problems were in the focus of our very protracted and substantive talks throughout the visit -- at any time and any place the two Presidents were in.

The Soviet Union is an organic part of Europe. And the particularly turbulent processes in Eastern Europe are direct spin-offs of perestroika and the drive for our country's renovation. There is a feedback connection too. The rate and essence of the progress toward a new quality of life for the Soviet people depend on the impact the transformations in Europe will have on us. This is why our European policy is vital for the success of perestroika.

For the first time ever, it seems, there is a chance for all states and nations of the continent to coexist in the conditions of a lasting peace on the principles of humanism and voluntary concord and in line with the true national interests. We should

not waste this chance to disembark from the age-old policy of alienation in favour of the voluntary concord and organic interaction of nations in line with the true national interests

Today however this transfer is inseparable from the developing process of the two German states unification I deem it necessary to repeat from this rostrum we fully appreciate the striving of the Germans to live in a single state but German unification has external aspects to it One is the border issue Another is the united Germany's military and political status Yet another is the issue of the rights of the four victors of World War II European peace and security largely hinge on solutions to these issues

There are quite understandable reasons why fair solutions to these issues are crucial for our country and our people Our nation's historical memory and our concern for the future of the generations to come prompt us to take all possible steps to ensure a dependable security for our country even when Europe is negotiating hairpin curves This approach of ours fully accords with the interests of all other European nations the Germans included

Today is crucial How do we dovetail the further progress of the European process to a fair settlement of the German unification's external aspects and do it in such a way as to keep intact the mighty and far-reaching promise of Europe's life being rebuilt along new lines The stakes are too high and the global developments are too important to let ourselves slip on any one problem however difficult

The prime task is to launch a concerted effort without discriminating against anyone in the process to seek a solution to the German issue which should be up to the mark of the constructive European process and help strengthen trust rather

than destroy the things that have been attained. We need a solution with a time dimension to it and synchronised as far as possible with the European process. There may be different approaches to this synchronisation.

I told President Bush instead of concentrating on the united Germany's membership in NATO should we not think of a way to bring closer together the structures that are still separating Europe into blocs? For if we want to put an end to the continent's split for all times we should also bring the military-political structures into line with the unification trends of the European process.

Following the recent session of the Political Consultative Committee in Moscow the Warsaw Pact is launching an effort to review its own nature to accord with the developments in Europe. Therefore we have every right to expect that NATO will reciprocate. We would welcome a review of this union's military doctrine, a branchchild of the cold war, at the forthcoming NATO Council's session in London in July. The issue of ensuring the united Germany's security in a new way could then be resolved within this new framework. One way is to build it on two pillars -- both in the West and the East. As a hypothesis it could be a form of associated membership of the new German state in both alliances for as long as they exist. This dual membership could become a bond of sorts, a mould for new European structures.

We do not exclude that NATO and the Warsaw Pact can be preserved in one form or another for a longer period of time than we can imagine today. So they could conclude an agreement with due account for the emergence of a new united Germany and transformations in their own structures.

In any case it is clear that **there is no avoiding a transi-**

transitional period

The united Germany could proclaim that for the duration of this period it will honour all obligations inherited from both West Germany and the GDR that for the duration of this period the Bundeswehr will continue to be subordinated to NATO and the GDR's troops to the government of the new Germany. At the same time Soviet troops would be retained in the territory of the GDR as it is today. This would ameliorate the concerns of many states and help build the future structures of European security.

We told the US President if at any time during this transitional period you have the feeling that the Soviet Union is trying to trample upon American interests Washington will have the inalienable right to tear the agreement and make unilateral reciprocal steps.

Conversely one should clearly understand that if we feel that our stance on the German issue is ignored the positive processes in Europe might be endangered gravely threatened. I'm not jocking. In view of the basic interests of the people we would have to stop and think again. There is no need to say that such a turn of events indeed is very undesirable.

I think I understand the main reason behind the current position of the United States on the issue of Germany's membership in NATO. Washington believes that the American military presence in Europe is a factor of stability and hence would like to see it preserved.

I told the President since the American presence in Europe does play a certain role in the effort to ensure stability and is an element of the overall strategic situation it presents no problem to us. Life will be the judge of what will follow. Europe is the natural pivot of global politics and if one is to

allow imbalances here the consequences would tell on the whole world US-Soviet cooperation meanwhile is one of the pillars of the European political stability

At the same time I think it is a gross miscalculation -- and I conveyed my opinion to George Bush -- to connect the American presence in Europe exclusively with NATO and see West Germany's withdrawal from NATO as the beginning of the end of this union and consequently the beginning of the end of the American military presence in the continent We do not share this conclusion but we do appreciate the US concern, in particular in relation to present day realities

How did Washington react to this stance of ours?

Bush was always questioning us why we feared Germany's membership in NATO He assured us it would benefit all He said nobody was going to encroach on our interests and our security He said they were ready to take them into account and formalise them in Secretary of State Baker's nine-point plan

I replied we would agree to Germany's membership if you i.e. the United States and NATO were to agree to associated membership and the principle of the blocs rapprochement parallel to the two Germanys unification in the course of which both the GDR and West Germany would honour their earlier commitments and if the blocs themselves are concurrently reformed the reform being dovetailed to the Vienna process and the European process as a whole

Admittedly the situation is complicated Yet one should admit that while before the summit the Washington administration the President and the Europeans took iron-clad positions today one can discern certain contemplation on their part We want -- and it is the Soviet Union's firm position -- to pool

efforts in the search for solutions in harmony with the general positive developments in Europe and the world and help strengthen security rather than undermine or weaken it

The search for such solutions is under way. Eduard Shevardnadze and James Baker have had a short new meeting in Copenhagen. We have had talks with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Great Britain. We have agreed to instruct our foreign ministries to expressly study this issue in particular on a bilateral basis. Yesterday our Foreign Minister had negotiations with West German Foreign Minister Genscher in Brest.

It is still too early to talk of any results, but we will continue to exert efforts imbued with goodwill and responsibility. I must say we see that the other side is getting a better idea of our arguments and our concerns.

I can assure you, Deputies, that in the course of further meetings, in particular in the course of the forthcoming meeting of foreign ministers of the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom, France, West Germany and the German Democratic Republic in Berlin, we will display a relative degree of flexibility, act in line with the interests of all sides concerned and the right of all to equal security, to stand up to the security interests of our country.

Regional Problems Worldwide

The two powers' responsibility is not limited to Europe alone, although Europe is the key issue -- without proper solutions there, things will not go properly elsewhere in the world.

But if we do not take measures to demilitarise world politics and the entire international situation burdened by confrontation and grave armed conflicts a peaceful period in history will turn into an utopia and our attainment of a new civilisation will become impossible

That is why conventionally speaking regional problems remain a vitally important part of the Soviet-American dialogue This time they were the subject of intensive discussions at Camp David

Just recently regional conflicts were a source of serious complications in Soviet-American relations In an atmosphere of confrontation, virtually any conflict of this kind would automatically increase tension between East and West In fact everything that was going on in the world then was viewed from the angle of that confrontation The Camp David talks saw a new approach leading to the rejection of the habit of regarding regional conflicts as an object of rivalry between the two powers That was something new Today both sides regard regional conflicts as a tragedy for those involved in them and as a negative occurrence in world politics There is mutual understanding that every effort should be made to put an early end to these conflicts and settle them -- not on the battlefield but by political means at the negotiating table So one can say that the criteria of the new thinking are gaining the upper hand in the Soviet and American approaches to this sphere of world politics

Of course it would be an exaggeration to assert that President Bush and I had no disagreements and that there was complete identity of views We stated for instance that the United States attitude to Cuba is still burdened with complexes inherited from the cold-war epoch And we rejected

suspensions based on delusion concerning the nature of our relations with Cuba. Our position is unshakeable and we are for the normalisation of American-Cuban relations. The Soviet Union is ready to promote this if both sides turn to us for assistance. Now the ball is in the US court so to speak.

We have thoroughly discussed all aspects of the **Middle East** conflict and revealed vital areas of understanding in some of our estimates concerning the causes of recurrent outbursts there and the slow pace of settlement. Our basic position is well known and there is no need to set it forth here. For all the shades in the two parties' approaches in general, Camp David revealed our mutual understanding that sooner or later we'll have to convene an international conference and that both sides will have to act accordingly.

Of course we talked about the settling of Soviet immigrants in the Israel-occupied Palestinian lands. The President stated in clear terms that the United States was against the emergence of new immigrant settlements beyond the 1967 line that is in the occupied territory. That was a very important statement in the context of our meeting.

On our part, taking into account the recent talks in Moscow on this problem with President Assad of Syria and Mubarak of Egypt, we stated the following: either Israel takes our mutual concern into account and makes corresponding conclusions, or the Soviet Union will probably have to postpone issuing exit visas to citizens of Jewish origin till Israel gives corresponding pledges. I think Israel should heed the insistent advice of the two Presidents and act sensibly.

During the discussion of the **Afghan Problem** which proceeded in an absolutely different tone than previously, both sides stated that they were not interested in fanning tensions.

The result was in my opinion that the two sides decided to work to end the civil war naturally on the condition that the national dignity rights and interests of all Afghans be observed

There are practically no disagreements on the problem of **Southern Africa** The two sides spoke with satisfaction about the joint contribution to the ongoing settlement of the Namibian problem We shall broaden contacts with all forces involved in the search for a just settlement of the complicated problems facing this region

Despite certain differences in emphasis the sides expressed readiness to promote the normalisation of the situation in the **Korean Peninsula** and in **Cambodia** the establishment of peaceful relations and the settlement of disputable issues

The joint statement on **Ethiopia** was the first-ever joint humanitarian action which we hope will help restore peace in that country tormented by famine and civil war

On the whole speaking about this range of problems one can state that we did pass from rivalry through mutual understanding over to cooperation in the interests of our people and for the benefit of international relations

Bilateral Relations

This title is somewhat approximate though It is used in diplomatic practice but in this case does not reflect the content of this particular aspect of our policies as the subject of the discussion is relations between the world powers

What was attained in this area also points to the success of the summit It looks like a meaningful step has been made

towards the world economy For as you understand the United States is its powerful and most influential part

A whole package of agreements and protocols dealing with economic scientific technological and other issues has been signed They have been set out in the press All of them are extremely beneficial to the Soviet Union in the literal material sense of the word The content of this voluminous package is unprecedented

The trade agreement deserves special mention It wasn't easy to reach it Till the last moment we were not sure that the Americans would agree to sign it Nevertheless President Bush made this step and even suggested that the agreement be signed by the two Presidents I highly estimate this fact for at the moment it is not the economic aspect that matters In practice a long time will pass before we feel the advantages offered by this agreement

The most important thing is the political significance of this act at the current sharp transitional period of perestroika in the Soviet Union This means that the American leaders really trust us and that from the purely rhetorical support for perestroika and mere wishes of success they are passing over to action

The US President made a brave and principled choice giving preference to the cardinal things in the world politics and resisting momentary and transient considerations which many forced on him and continue to do so

On the eve of the visit those against the trade agreement made their opposition clearly felt in the US press and in the Congress The United States they said should not give the Soviet Union any economic gifts till it adopts the law on the freedom of emigration and till Moscow gives full freedom to

the Lithuanian separatists

However direct contacts with the American public during our visit revealed that such voices did not at all reflect the position of the whole of America I met with many American businessmen scientists and intellectuals among them outstanding figures exerting enormous influence on the world economy and American politics And I can say without the fear of being mistaken that this authoritative section of American society is driven not merely by curiosity but by practical interest in broadening contacts with us Sincerely and in a businesslike way they are searching for active cooperation with the Soviet Union This very important circumstance provides more evidence of the change in American society's attitudes to us and of the growing trust in the present-day Soviet Union in the West

You know that the US side made a condition concerning the conclusion of a commercial agreement This condition is the law of exit and entry into the USSR to be adopted by the Supreme Soviet It has already passed its first reading and will be adopted But mind you this is in no way a major concession to the United States but rather the natural development of perestroika with due attention to the interests of state security and individuals

The commercial agreement envisages unconditional most-favoured-nation status for both the countries for three years with automatic extension for a second term This agreement will provide a better business environment for US and Soviet partners including direct employment advertising using all mass media and mail direct contacts and marketing on each other's territory

The agreement contains a special intellectual property

section covering computer software trade secrets records etc

We have undertaken to draft and submit to the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1990 and 1991 bills on issues not as yet regulated under Soviet legislation

The agreement will set a new legal environment conducive to the lifting of all US restrictions on financial guarantees and crediting in the state and private sector and for the settlement of outstanding financial claims In a nutshell this crucial economic area will be given the green light

We have concluded a five-year **grain sale agreement** (as from January 1 1990) that will improve our flexibility in purchasing grain in the United States This agreement will enable us to vary the volume and the range of purchases and protect our commercial interests by envisaging state subsidies and stricter quality requirements

The **civil aviation agreement** envisages an intensified and expanded air services between our countries The number of flights on each side may grow from 30 to 84 a week with up to 500 000 passengers carried annually against 130 000 a year currently *Aeroflot* will be able to fly to Chicago San Francisco Miami, Anchorage and US airlines to Kiev Minsk Tbilisi Riga Khabarovsk and Magadan Besides every side shall have the right to 100 charter flights a year This agreement will yield much profit in roubles and foreign currency

The **maritime transportation agreement** drastically improves conditions for the Soviet merchant fleet on routes to and from the United States It creates certain privileges for port calls by either side The USSR has regained its right to ship cargos from the United States to third countries The agreement provides incentives for closer contacts between shipping companies and better cooperation in all relevant areas

We have also signed a memorandum of understanding on the **culture, science, education USA - USSR** project with a view to extensive computerisation in education the training of Soviet personnel and preserving cultural values At the initial stage IBM Corp will supply over 13 000 PCs for high schools for training disabled people deaf and blind children and for managers

Intended to last 10 - 15 years this project will enable us to develop financial and technical aspects of producing personal computers in the Soviet Union

An agreement on broader cooperation between the Soviet foreign economic consortium (including 22 entities) and the US trade consortium that includes major US firms with a multibillion-dollar turnover envisages 20 - 25 joint ventures to produce consumer goods passenger automobiles and medical equipment It also envisages radical modernisation in the food-processing medical machine-building and oil industries The agreement will contribute to regional development and the accomplishment of social and economic programmes in the Kazakh SSR

The letter of intent between the Ministry of Oil and Gas Industry of the USSR, the Council of Ministers of the Kazakh SSR, "Tengizneftegaz" and "Chevron" regulates the procedure of transferring the Tengiz oil field to the Sovchevroil joint venture operating at the Korolyovskoye oil field It is a virtual breakthrough in economic relations between our nations that will result in thousands of millions of dollars being invested in the petroleum sector and in most advanced and environment-friendly technologies

The US Administration lifted several trade barriers for the summit COCOM liberalisation is in the pipeline the US has

allowed Soviet nickel exports and the sales of control-data computers to ensure the safety of nuclear engineering

This transaction with the Minneapolis firm we visited pushes through multiple trade ban barriers. However, on June 6 the House of Representatives voted to freeze exports of sophisticated equipment to the USSR, linking its decision to Lithuania. Still, we believe the settlement is a matter of time.

We have vast unsatisfied demand for telephone communications. Currently, we are in the process of negotiating a project with US West to build a fibre-optic line across Siberia that would satisfy domestic demand, complete the global network and ensure first-rate services for the Pacific region and Europe. However, there are hurdles in its way as well.

In my talks with the US President, we discussed the vast potential for our scientific and technological cooperation in peaceful uses of atomic energy. We have signed a joint statement on an international experimental thermonuclear reactor. Besides, we have signed an agreement on ocean studies and made a joint statement on the creation of a US-Soviet park across the Bering Strait.

The agreement on broader student exchanges has been highly welcomed in the United States, since this will mean not small and isolated groups any longer, but as many as 1 000 students from each side every year.

We believe that Soviet students will greatly benefit from these exchanges, not only in terms of their professional training but also on the education methods, working and industrial practices, entrepreneurial spirit and everyday life. We have a lot to learn from the US in these areas.

Broad student exchanges are an important channel for better understanding, having a political impact.

Conversion is another channel of expanding US-Soviet economic cooperation. Taking into account the advanced level of military technologies, it opens up many new areas of fruitful cooperation, including electronics and computer science, space research and many related fields.

US business and scientific communities, in particular on the West coast (in San Francisco and Stanford) have not remained indifferent to our offers to jointly exploit the natural wealth of Siberia and the Far East. They are also interested in the free enterprise zone in Nakhodka as well as in other regions.

In a nutshell, the broader bilateral relations promoted by the summit offer us a better opportunity to integrate the USSR in the world market and the international division of labour.

However, there is one more important dimension to this issue. I refer to the material basis for US-Soviet relations and their development.

Everybody realises today that we can only make these relations stable and dynamic if we expand our cooperation in the scientific and technological sphere and establish numerous and intensive economic links.

It is crucial that the US business community realises this fact. As it is in long-term US interests, the business community is reacting positively and is ready to assist the reform of this country at the critical phase of perestroika in order to smoothen the painful transitional period.

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The success of the summit was a result of not only the new character of the dialogue between the Presidents (though this of course is the most important factor) or of the official

negotiations where (as far as our country is concerned) great credit must be given to Eduard Shevardnadze and to our present Ambassador to the United States Alexandr Bessmertnykh. This credit is shared by many other comrades and especially by those who were actively involved in the visit. Among them I would like to mention Yuri Maslyukov and a large group of People's Deputies: Primakov, Osipyan, Akhromeyev, Velikhov, Falin, Arbatov, Likhachev, Shatalin, Golik, Lyudmila Arutyunyan, Bikhodzhai, Rakhimova, Ryzhov, Burlatski, Kruchina, Yefremov, Dzasokhov as well as Yagodin, Dobrynin and the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Malkevich. Many other people whom I have not mentioned deserve gratitude too, including journalists and public figures whose effective work was coordinated by Comrade Grachev.

You could see on television how we were received in America. We fully felt the interest and sympathy and even solidarity with which people there are following what we are doing now. Some as a result of serious analysis, others out of common sense and still others simply from a sense of involvement in what is happening in today's world and concern for its future -- but a huge mass of people in the United States are taking perestroika in the Soviet Union as a great historic cause which concerns everyone.

I also think and am deeply convinced that but for this attitude in American society President Bush would have hardly gone for such agreements. This is because the opposed forces are quite numerous and strong. It is very important that perestroika, which at times proceeds very painfully and is accompanied by major trials and tribulations, encounters such broad understanding and support throughout the world.

The world is changing in front of our very eyes, often quite

unexpectedly upsetting the prejudices and stereotypes on which the mass psychology and politics of yesterday were based. This enhances our confidence that we are on the right track and that our policy of new thinking, establishment of contacts and unification of all those who want to build a safe modern world strike a responsive chord even in places where just recently there was only mistrust and hostility. Our people are winning ever more friends, all of which shows that our course towards becoming part of the mainstream of civilisation is realistic.

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All this applies to the visit to Canada, too. For all the importance of the Soviet-American summit, it must not eclipse that visit. Soviet-Canadian relations have importance of their own.

The visit to Canada and its results are yet another important step in the development of what can be described as friendly relations with this big country, which is in a certain sense our neighbour. We have many points of contact in bilateral relations, including the economic, cultural and geographical spheres. All of them were discussed in a very amicable and promising spirit. The scope and continuity of our economic cooperation with Canada and the existence of a solid framework of treaties and laws allow us to hope for new progress in these relations in connection with our economic reform. The Canadian business community is also counting on this. There are also high hopes for the Canadian-Soviet Business Council, which was set up in Moscow last November and for the implementation of agreements on the promotion of

mutual protection of capital investments

During the visit the two sides discussed questions of food trade and of Canada's participation in major economic projects including those associated with the renovation of Leningrad. There is also agreement that the establishment of joint ventures may impart strong impetus to our entire business cooperation.

As for the talks with Prime Minister Mulroney who gives the impression of a serious and solid statesman, they dealt mostly with the German issue and through that issue with the role of Canada in the European process. In principle the position of Brian Mulroney does not differ from the American one. That is why my arguments were the same as in the later talks with President Bush of which I have already spoken here.

On the whole I think that the visit to Canada has been beneficial for the general atmosphere in the European process too.

To sum it all up I would like to repeat what I said in America. I have no doubt that this Washington summit will go down in history as a meeting of hope and optimism. It was a major international event. We already know the world's reaction to it. Influential circles including the participants in the meetings of the Warsaw Pact Political Consultative Committee have appraised it highly. By the way it must be noted that it was for the first time that the PCC meeting gathered in such a format. The important thing is that all states have done their best to make sure that it take place. Also important is the fact that the PCC meeting was distinguished by a fairly open atmosphere where the participants also discussed the current processes in Europe and in the world. Next it is important that a high degree of accord was reached in the evaluation of the role of the Warsaw Pact and on the need for it to reorganise with a

view to building a new structure of European security and implementing the idea of a common European home both of which are fundamental issues

Of course the internal developments in the Warsaw Pact member states were not a subject of special discussion at this PCC meeting Nevertheless everyone spoke about it The general idea was that these countries are embarking upon profound changes and that cooperation in all spheres must continue

Returning to the summit meetings in the US and Canada and expressing satisfaction with their results I would like to warn everyone against our common habit of complacency with what is reflected in the documents statements and reports These however are just the foundation for the conversion of the policy of new thinking into concrete vital deeds and for the use of its inherent opportunities in accomplishing the practical tasks of perestroika in the economic scientific technical and cultural spheres

I hope that the Supreme Soviet and its committees will seriously attend to the questions associated with the results of the visit for they deserve such attention and will take under their control all questions falling within their jurisdiction First of all our parliament must of course join the process of the discussions of the treaty on 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive weapons now that the main attitudes have been agreed upon and we are approaching the final stage of its preparation for signing The Supreme Soviet must thoroughly study all the points and elements involved It can be safely assumed that the US Congress will attend to this treaty in earnest and I don't think that our present Supreme Soviet will discuss it any less seriously

Absolutely obvious too is the need to develop fruitful inter-parliamentary links with the US and Canada, notably at the level of committees and commissions. Given the real role played by the US Congress and by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, this is one of the mandatory conditions for effective implementation of any accords and agreements of state importance.

So on the whole the Soviet-American summit has been a success and has lived up to expectations. A great deal of work has been done, but there is just as much difficult and important work ahead. The meeting has put the Soviet-American dialogue on a new, higher level. That's about all.

Thank you for your attention.

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Mikhail Gorbachev then answered questions from Deputies.

Gorbachev: why did I not mention comrade Ismailov among those who helped and participated in this work? There are many people whom I didn't mention. I must say, though, that Comrade Ismailov was actively involved in our work. During the visits I have the following practice: a group of comrades usually leaves earlier and holds a broad and intensive dialogue with the public and the press on television and at research centres. It usually is a very busy schedule. When I flew in Washington from Canada and all of us gathered late in the night to exchange views, Comrade Ismailov expressed very interesting ideas and observations made by him in the course of his communication and contacts with Americans. I want to extend my apologies to all those whom I haven't mentioned.

You are right to have reminded me of this

Comrade Koltsov here asks In his report to Congress in March 1990 the US President noted that the US had turned down our proposals for negotiations on Naval force reductions The report contains arguments explaining the unacceptability of such reductions for the US Does this mean that this US position is forcing us to build up our Navy and first of all to modernise our big aircraft-carrying ships?

Gorbachev I think that the whole process is developing in such a way that at the next stages we will come to the discussion of this type of armaments too For the time being the Soviet-American talks and the talks in Vienna on Naval force reductions have been adjourned till the next stage

I must say -- and I joked about this while talking to the Americans -- that their Administration is heavily dominated by former Naval officers Mr Bush himself is a former Naval pilot This is apparently telling on the issue we are discussing The Navy is a kind of *sanctum sanctorum* for them I can understand this So I think can all military men and people who are more or less versed in such matters What American society consumes comes to the US on a regular basis from all over the world and in the defence of sea lanes which are vital for America the Navy is seen as a very important component in the overall policy This is not to mention the fact that it is also a very important component in rivalry Even so I think that at the next stages we will deal with this favourite baby of the US Administration too

But I haven't answered the second part of the question I see that Comrade Gryazin is shaking his head meaning that once again money will be wasted for nothing We will examine the Naval programme in general but I haven't said anything

about aircraft-carriers. The question dealt with them and I have said all that I can for the moment.

Question from Comrade Moshnyaga Please inform us the Supreme Soviet and People's Deputies of the amount of spending that can be diverted to social programmes due to the conclusion of the treaty to reduce strategic chemical etc weapons. Also by how many per cent will the defence budget be reduced in connection with these agreements?

Gorbachev Comrade Moshnyaga has dug down to the root of the matter. That's what we have done as well because in implementing the principles of our new foreign policy we are pursuing two objectives. The first is to create the necessary favourable external environment to enable us to tackle domestic tasks and the overall problem now facing mankind -- how to ensure its survival. That's the first objective. The second we want to ease the load on our economy. No other economy has been placed under such strain as ours. Compare for yourselves we have maintained strategic parity with a country as powerful as the United States which according to the most conservative estimates produces twice as much as we do. This means that the USA spends less of its national income on military needs than we do. When Reagan was in office there was a time when military spending was as high as 8 - 10 per cent of annual national income. In those years in percentage terms we were spending considerably more. This is what we are all now considering. And we intend to take radical measures to attain both objectives. We cannot allow the security of our country and people to be endangered. I don't wish right now to go into details on how to do this while achieving our set aims but we don't intend to repeat our mistakes. For example we made ourselves lots and lots of tanks and are now wondering what to

do with them To guarantee security we need to guarantee quality From this point of view everything is connected with military research which is one area in which we cannot allow ourselves to fall behind and which should be capable of doing all the jobs given to it

As far as the actual production of armaments is concerned this is something we must take a close look at Here other criteria apply

We shall be debating this together in autumn It s still early to speak of any specific outcome but I wish to say that large savings are going to be made

Another question arises We should now thoroughly elaborate our approach to defence sector conversion During the initial phase we made a number of silly mistakes putting good industrial fixed assets and personnel in the defence sector to work on all sorts of nonsense We are in danger of losing a great deal here but at least we now realise this Some very interesting programmes have appeared We are embarking upon a national conversion programme which will tap to the full the potential of the defence sector to solve problems that crop up as the economy is tailored to the needs of people above all else

Comrades **Kuznetsov or Kuznetsova and Tikhonenkov** from Kazakhstan ask Did the negotiations with President Bush deal with any global environmental problems?

Yes they did moreover with the understanding that it is already time for us to work together Specific cooperation in at least two areas has already been mapped out This is cooperation in Europe and also in the Arctic with the USA and Canada In connection with this another question arises does the Tengiz project present any environmental danger?

No Thorough preparation has been carried out Highly

interesting technology has been proposed, and which might also be suitable for use elsewhere.

Nikolai Vassilievich Neiland says that during a press conference with President Mitterrand I suggested that the reunified Germany could follow the French approach to membership of NATO, that is, be part of the political organisation but not the military. Firstly, when a closer look was taken -- and this was discussed with President Bush, especially at Camp David, where the exchanges were extremely frank -- it turned out that this is a myth, because nonetheless NATO planning takes French forces into account. We have been told the same from intelligence sources.

Secondly, I think that the following option is more reliable. It was decided at a session of the Political and Consultative Council to reform the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and quickly, within a year, giving its political aspect much greater emphasis and revamp its structure along the lines of the defence doctrine that has already been drawn up and endorsed. The Council's policy document is highly positive, and now has to be backed up with deeds. And if the NATO summit due in July in London doesn't see fit to respond, we shall be entitled to subject such a stance to criticism. Does the West really think that all movement should be only on our side? This is why I say that it too must change. Incidentally, changes are already taking place. President Bush and I discussed them while flying in his helicopter over the Washington suburbs. Their problems might be of a different nature, but nonetheless there are plenty of them. What we need, said Bush, is a domestic and foreign policy which will make them easier to solve.

If NATO opts for the same approach as the Political and Consultative Council there will be a real possibility of agree-

ments between them being reached I have already discussed the practical aspects of this with Mrs Thatcher and even reflected on the structure of a possible declaration i.e. what such a document might contain

Thus if both blocs now change their doctrines and the structures of the armed forces while disarming on the basis of the Vienna negotiations as they transform themselves politically currently-existing security structures might conceivably become the foundation for new pan-European one We propose the following why not set up some kind of organisation that is above the alliances that would hear reports from both sides carry out exchanges supervise confidence-building and so on? Why not maintain obligations to the respective alliances? Not to mention the fact that the Bundeswehr needs to undergo the appropriate reductions let it be subordinate to NATO while those forces in what is still the GDR also after reductions should be at the disposal of the German state but not of NATO itself This would permit a solution to the status of our forces there These possibilities give rise to a new form of association which should be thought together A whole range of specific problems arises And of course all this needs to be synchronised with the establishment of pan-European structures along the lines of a common economic legal and cultural and of course military zone that is a security zone

We are not demanding that this should be as we propose Let others Mrs Thatcher's for example ideas be taken into account as long as they are in the general interest

Does the second question need answering? No It will be answered in due time Nikolai Vassilievich

Question from Comrade **Djumatova** Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich for over 40 years Europe has been free of war

which is due to nuclear deterrence. Yet this has been achieved at the expense of the health of the people living in the vicinity of the Semipalatinsk range. How are they to be compensated for the harm done to them?

Gorbachev We together with you are paying a great deal of attention to this. No concern will be ignored. Research has been commissioned involving not only military research but the entire scientific establishment. You also have the organisation led if I am not mistaken by Comrade Suleimenov. The problem of Semipalatinsk is under close scrutiny and much tougher operational standards have been applied. To repeat we are subjecting this question to serious consideration. People want the range to be closed and I understand this. Closure is our long-term aim but we cannot do it right now. But we are doing all that we can in order to protect people and exclude any kind of accident. This matter is under my and the government's supervision.

Comrade Kirillov asked: Do you not feel that it is essential to depoliticise the Soviet Army in the light of the reunification of Germany, dual membership of Germany in NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the political changes that have taken place within the Pact's member-states and even the inevitability that various parties will come to power in various Union Republics?

Answer No.

Questions from Comrade Nazarenko Firstly Nakhodka has been mooted as a free enterprise zone. Does this mean that such zones cannot be set up anywhere else in the country?

Answer No, it doesn't. I think that events will show where such zones are also required in connection with maybe cross-border trade or joint ventures which are obviously the main trend here. But objections might be raised and there are

diverse opinions on the matter. Zones can be set up only with the agreement of all. I believe they wanted such zones in Novgorod or Pskov, but there were major difficulties. Agreement must always be reached and action must always be on the basis of such agreement.

Secondly, about conversion. Are there any agreements on exchange of experience?

President Bush and I discussed this and even the possibility of giving it a try jointly at a few enterprises. There is a joint project in existence, but it is proceeding with difficulty. It is nonetheless highly interesting and promising. I mean the aircraft project. In its construction we're working together on the engines and, in part, on instrumentation with American firms, while Israel is involved in the flight-deck instrumentation. The prospects are good. Such an aircraft is needed and will have an enormous market. Calculations show that income from it could run to five or even ten thousand million (dollars).

Comrade Desyatov of Komsomolsk-on-Amur asks: Does the Centre envisage participation of Eastern and Western countries, in particular the United States, Canada, Korea and Japan, in the industrial development of the Soviet Far East?

Gorbachev: I think such participation is already emerging, but many things about it are not yet clear enough. I expect interesting cooperation there, but we need to take care to avoid any economic and other damage to the local population.

Chairman: I think that's enough questions for today, Comrades. Or do you want to ask anything else?

Gorbachev: There are still plenty left. What if you stop writing notes? Then I'll have enough time to answer the ones I have here.

Question: Many Soviet-American understandings have

been signed one of them with the Chevron firm about the development of the Tenghiz natural deposits Will any of these be offered to the USSR Supreme Soviet for ratification?

Gorbachev We have to sort out whether such decisions are put to ratification or merely discussed by committees We shall see

Question Did you discuss swapping place with President Bush for a short time? (laughter) Would you like to rule America? (more laughter)

Gorbachev I love humour But this question has something serious behind it You mean Mr Bush can help us in certain matters? The question was put by Deputy Belous I will think it over

Question Many are interested in the amount of our grain purchases

Gorbachev Eight to fourteen million tons

Question What precisely will be the cuts in military expenditures with individual East European countries leaving the Warsaw Treaty Organisation? Will military expenditures grow or shrink if certain members leave the organisation?

Gorbachev We shall work according to our plans I know something else Some people think that if a bloc is dismantled or some country leaves it national armies have to grow as there will be no longer a bloc to rely on

Question The Soviet military industry is being converted Are there similar developments in the United States? If there are what problems do they involve?

Gorbachev We have common problems as far as I know Besides the military-industrial complex is always loath to cut production

Question What about the Lithuanian factor in respect of

trade agreements?

Gorbachev: You must have noticed that whatever President Bush said, he always linked the ratification of the trade agreement to a law on free emigration and immigration to be adopted in the Soviet Union.

Question: Esteemed President, is a nuclear-free world a practical prospect or illusion? Shall we have to maintain nuclear arms at a certain level as a deterrent?

Gorbachev: You have the same view as Mrs. Thatcher. You're from Kiev, which she visited -- she's evidently persuaded you, (laughter). I've been arguing with her on this issue since 1984, and she hasn't yet convinced me. Just look at the current developments. On January 15, 1986, we came out with a programme for a world free of violence and nuclear arsenals. At first, it was called an illusion. International experts will remember this. Is that not so, Comrade Burlatsky and Comrade Velikhov?

Now look what has happened to this illusion. We signed the INF Treaty, and are about to sign a treaty to reduce strategic offensive weapons by half. So let's continue along this road now we are on it. Chernobyl must have convinced us even more that this is the way to go things.

One unit blew up at just one nuclear station-- and a vast country hasn't yet coped with the consequences. New problems come up every day. We have already spent 14,000 million roubles. So we see what madness nuclear warfare would be, even local. And then any local war is sure to spread.

So a nuclear-free world is a noble political goal, and we must do what we can to attain it.

Deputy Petrushenko: In his interview with the *Nedelya* (weekly), the President of the Nevada Movement substantiated

the necessity and expediency of unilateral nuclear disarmament. What have Presidents Bush and Gorbachev to say about this?

Gorbachev I can't speak on President Bush's behalf but I'm sure he'll be against it at least at present. We have for example proposed a stop to nuclear tests again and again -- and it doesn't work. As to the expediency of unilateral nuclear disarmament I think it is right to proceed along the current line. We are progressing together and this makes many things clear: controls and cooperation are being established and new level of trust appears. Let's go on like this. We made unilateral steps where they were necessary especially where we had evident superiority. Sometimes one has to act unilaterally to encourage the other side to follow. It's all carefully considered political strategy and tactics. Some people fail to see why this or that step was made. I don't rule out unilateral action but where nuclear arms reduction and disarmament are concerned I'm sure we're on the right road. We dismantled our shorter and medium-range missiles and are halving strategic arsenals. Now Mr Bush agrees to talks on tactical and nuclear arms and we have a preliminary understanding for the talks to start after the Vienna agreement.

Comrade **Kerimov** asks whether further promotion of international cooperation on human rights came up in our discussions.

Gorbachev This issue always comes up in our talks.

Comrade **Peters** asks whether we debated the establishment of a nuclear-free or better still a demilitarised zone in the Baltic Republics.

Gorbachev This issue didn't come up on a practical plane.

Here s a question that takes a whole page from Comrade Tsybukh. He asks on his committee s behalf Did the Presidents discuss contacts between Soviet and American young people and how to encourage these contacts?

We not merely discussed it -- student exchange has been increased as I already mentioned. I support youth contacts. I enjoyed my stay at Stanford University when I walked a kilometre and a half or something like this with ten thousand undergraduates lining my path -- never seen anything like this in my life. All who accompanied me appreciated it too. Young people are very friendly and spontaneous. They say outright whatever they think and feel and ask all kinds of questions. They are full of sympathy for what we are doing in our country. I think that it is precisely between young people that we should promote exchanges. Young people are the best mixers with few complexes. No one else makes lasting friendships so easily. We must welcome their contacts. I m sure.

Question Esteemed Mikhail Sergeyevich many serious understandings with the United States depend on the Baltic situation. What are your immediate plans in respect of these republics?

Answer I don t think they differ from yours -- at least I hope so. Controversies won t do here. I want to specify one thing however. The United States is interested in the Baltic issue but doesn t think it wholly determines its relations with the Soviet Union relations already shaped and steadily expanding. So you exaggerate when you say that America thinks one thing depends on the other.

Now for my plans. We all -- the President the Government and the USSR Supreme Soviet -- share a mandate of the Third Congress of People s Deputies which declared the

decisions of Lithuania's Supreme Soviet invalid and unlawful

Here I'd like to say a few words to Comrade Sobchak. He was one of those who made this resolution although they say that judging by his interview -- which I've got to read for myself -- he had forgotten what was in the resolution. Let me remind him now. It's a weakness we all share forgetting what we said the day before yesterday to say nothing of a fortnight ago. The document I'm referring to said that we recognise and support the right of self-determination. At the same time it instructed the President to do everything in his power to protect the constitutional system, citizens' constitutional rights and to create conditions which allow the implementation of the right of self-determination in constitutional forms.

I'm going to view this question in a broad context. The Congress revoked the statement of the Lithuanian Supreme Soviet deemed it unlawful and demanded its repeal. That's all there is to it -- no room for manoeuvre.

Voice from Audience: It should be repealed.

Gorbachev: Repealed, you say? I think we can start talks as soon as the Lithuanian Independence Act is suspended. We need its suspension at least for the talks. Now, however, the situation we had prior to March 10 is likely to be re-enacted. I hope our community will see this. I'm getting a torrent of telegrams about my alleged weakness and the Baltic leaders' strength. The authors mean that I haven't yet done everything in my power. But I think we're right to seek political solutions. This is a tough job but we have to do it. Not that I rule out further developments which may make us resort to any other measures. I want our Baltic friends to know this. If we have to we shall do what we can to protect our Constitution.

People are talking in the audience. Someone is disagree-

ing with me -- a voice I know Ah it s Comrade Kogan

I shall assume all responsibilities for so long as you and the entire nation put up with my Presidency I know all opinions But imagine me changing my plans with every word I hear with fundamental change all over our country when our political system is changing when we are introducing a new economic model and a new kind of federation Our country can t go on without these reforms An entirely new community is emerging which will live on new patterns Whoever says that he has a cure-all and promises brilliant results as soon as we switch to the market economy has to be told This is trash We must do everything in our power to reduce our problems to the minimum to make this time as painless as possible especially for the less well-off and those on fixed incomes We must do our best to keep our living standards at a decent level But whoever says that the switch will be easy as pie doesn t understand what it s all about Yet this misunderstanding is imposed on our nation as a truth

Comrade Kogan is always trying to push me to what he thinks revolutionary action (laughter) As to me I think that the answer lies in political solutions We already see them in outline All decisions have to be suspended at least for the talks Let all our Baltic friends think over this formula

The Council of the Federation will gather for a session today to discuss all these topical matters Let s think how to reform our Federation and act accordingly As I see it we have a sound basis to invigorate our Union of Sovereign States and preserve all benefits of this Union and cooperation I think the answer lies here and I hope you will see my point Let s not be nervous Spoil relations with the Baltic Republics and their population quarrels in the Supreme Soviet and the country as

a whole is the last thing I want. Such quarrels may make life intolerable for members of other nationalities living in those republics. Squabbles must be ruled out. The Baltic peoples will stay in their republics and we shall remain their neighbours. We have been neighbours for centuries and we have to cooperate. We must keep our heads cool and seek correct solutions instead of showing tantrums.

Some comrades from Murmansk ask me about what I said regarding the Semipalatinsk testing grounds and the prospective reduction of the test programme there. They are afraid the Novaya Zemlya grounds will then be more burdened. We always discuss this issue jointly. Olzhas Suleimenov wants the Semipalatinsk testing grounds closed down. Am I right, comrade Suleimenov? I agree in principle and I understand your demand -- but we have to weigh all matters. Our country's security is our common concern, and we can't afford rush decisions. We'll go on studying this issue which concerns all who live in Kazakhstan, the North and our whole country.

Comrade Prikhodko from Transcarpathian area, mentions the controversy around the Radar station under construction there. He asks whether the project will be given up and whether this issue has come under discussion. But then it's a domestic question. It's up to Vladimir Ivashko to report about the present state of this issue. I think he'll cope.

Thank you for your attention (applause)

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